

60. The method of claim 59 wherein the merchant computer transmits the gift certificate to the server computer in the form of an order acceptance request that includes extension information indicating that the order acceptance request is a gift certificate.

61. The method of claim 37 wherein the cryptographic security codes are embedded within respective ones of the plurality of modular elements.

62. The method of claim 37 wherein the cryptographic security codes are digital signatures.

63. The method of claim 37 wherein the cryptographic security codes are message authentication codes.

REMARKS

Applicant has cancelled claims 1 and 2

The Walker patent relied upon by the Examiner discloses cryptographic security codes at column 23, line 65 through column 25, line 54, but it does not disclose using these cryptographic security codes to individually protect modular elements as required by claim 3 and new independent claim 37.

As is discussed in the application as filed at page 9, line 20 through page 10, line 2, the individual protection of modular elements, such as coupons or gift certificates, allows the client computer and the server computer to efficiently store and forward the modular elements together with their protection codes (emphasis added):

The integrity of modular elements of order acceptance request 16 and order acceptance response 18 can be separately protected by protection codes embedded within the protected modular element. The protection codes can be implemented using digital signatures or message authentication codes or other well-known cryptographic security techniques. The embedding of these codes within modular elements of the messages enables client computer 12 and server 14 to efficiently store and forward the modular elements together with their protection codes. For example, an order acceptance request 16 may contain a digital coupon, protected by a protection code, that client computer 12 has obtained from a third party.

Applications of such digital coupons in the context of electronic commerce system 10 are described in more detail below.

For example, certain modular coupons may be gift certificates that are forwarded between computers several times, together with their individual protection codes, as is described at page 25, line 30 through page 26, line 21:

One implementation of the digital coupons discussed above involves gift certificates. The use of gift certificates involves selling the gift certificate and redeeming the gift certificate. In the selling phase, a merchant client computer creates an order acceptance request that includes extension information indicating that the order is a gift certificate for the item requested by the client computer. The order acceptance request is processed in the ordinary manner described above, and when the order acceptance request is captured, a post-capture plug-in of order capture controller 22 creates a serial number for the gift certificate and places it in a database along with its price and sends the client computer the gift certificate, which is a digital coupon that includes the serial number. The purchaser of the gift certificate can then transmit it to a recipient.

In the redemption phase, the recipient can click on an icon of the gift certificate and the recipient will receive a web page of a merchant that sells the product. The recipient receives an order form and initiates an order acceptance request. Plug-in 32 processes the gift certificate as part of the coupon checking step in the manner described above and ensures that the serial number of the coupon has been used only once by checking the database in which the serial number is stored.

Because the Walker patent fails to describe or suggest the use of cryptographic security codes to individually protect modular elements such as coupons or gift certificates, which can be stored and forwarded together with their cryptographic security codes, the claims are patentable over Walker.

Applicant submits that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance, which action is requested. Filed herewith is a check in payment of the extra claims fee and a Petition for Automatic Extension with the required fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Applicant : Brian J. Reistad et al.
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Respectfully submitted,

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James E. Mrose
James E. Mrose
Reg. No. 33,264

Fish & Richardson P.C.
601 Thirteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: (202) 783-5070
Facsimile: (202) 783-2331

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